



West Yorkshire Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee

23 February 2021

West Yorkshire Vaccination programme

Introduction

The West Yorkshire Programme is led by Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust, on behalf of the [West Yorkshire and Harrogate Health and Care Partnership](#), and is delivered by multi-agency teams in the five local places (Bradford district and Craven; Calderdale, Kirklees, Leeds and Wakefield).

The rollout of the vaccine in West Yorkshire has made significant progress. As of Sunday 7 February, we have delivered 433,196 vaccinations and we expect to have offered first vaccinations to all those in the first four priority groups by the middle of February.

Priority cohorts for vaccinations

The NHS is following the recommendations of the [Joint Committee for Vaccinations & Immunisations](#) (JCVI) to ensure the vaccine is offered to those at greatest risk from Covid-19 first

Their recommendations are based on preventing serious illness or death due to COVID-19 and the need to protect health and social care colleagues and systems. They also reflect the fact that evidence currently shows that the single greatest factor in risk of death from COVID-19 is age. The recommendations are that people are vaccinated in the following order:

1. Care home residents and staff
2. People aged 80 and over and frontline health and social care workers
3. People aged 75 and over
4. People aged 70 and over and clinically extremely vulnerable individuals
5. People aged 65 and over
6. People aged 16 to 64 with underlying health conditions which put them at higher risk of serious disease and mortality and those who are in receipt of a carer's allowance or who are the main carer of an elderly or disabled person whose welfare may be at risk if the carer falls ill.
7. People aged 60 and over
8. People aged 55 and over
9. People aged 50 and over

It is estimated that taken together, these groups represent around 99% of preventable deaths from COVID-19.

Vaccine rollout

Supply allocations are managed nationally by NHS England, working with Public Health England and the Department of Health and Social Care. Vaccine services were brought online in a phased approach, increasing as more supplies became available.

The Pfizer BioNTech vaccine was approved on 2 December 2020 and vaccinations started on 8 December. Due to its complex storage and logistic requirements, Pfizer was initially only able to be delivered from hospital hubs. Our first delivery in West Yorkshire was to Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust, followed by Bradford Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust on 14 December. Vaccinations were offered to people over the age of 80 and care home workers, as well as frontline health and social care staff across West Yorkshire who are at the greatest risk from COVID-19.

GP practices are working together as primary care networks (PCNs) to provide services to their patients from designated centres. Nationally PCNs were grouped into 'waves' for starting vaccinations, which was determined by the number of patients aged 80 and over. In West Yorkshire, our first PCN services started week beginning 14 December and all PCNs were providing vaccinations by 15 January 2021.

Once authorisation was given for the Pfizer BioNTech to be split into smaller packs, PCNs were also able to start vaccinating larger care homes with over 50 residents and the approval of the Oxford AstraZeneca vaccine on 30 December meant that all care homes could be offered vaccinations.

The availability of the Oxford AstraZeneca vaccine also facilitated additional hospital hubs coming online, including three mental health trusts and the Yorkshire Ambulance Service NHS Trust.

Community pharmacy services began on 14 January, with Boots in Halifax being our first pharmacy centre in West Yorkshire.

The large-scale community vaccination centres started opening in January, with the first centre in West Yorkshire – at Spectrum Healthcare in Wakefield – opening on the 25 January. This was followed by the centres at John Smith's Stadium in Huddersfield and Jacobs Well in Bradford on 1 February and Elland Road Stadium in Leeds on 8 February.

Vaccination services

Across West Yorkshire, we now have the following vaccination services:

- **10 Hospital hubs** – primarily for frontline health and care workers staff and also some inpatients
- **43 local vaccination centres** – delivered by PCNs to patients registered with their practices
- **Nine community pharmacy centres** – these services are managed by NHS England and pharmacies capable of providing over 1000 vaccinations a week were invited to apply to become centres.

- **Four community vaccination centres** – these have the flexibility to be scaled up to deliver high volumes of vaccinations and are in central locations with good public transport links and parking facilities.
- **Additional ‘pop-up’ services to meet local needs** – temporary clinics run by PCNs and held at locations intended to reach specific communities where there is greater vaccine hesitancy or access. These include a number of clinics at local mosques.

People are either being invited for a vaccination by the GP practice when it is their turn or are receiving a letter from the NHS national booking service. These are sent to anyone who is eligible for a vaccine and who lives within reasonable travelling distance of a community vaccination centre or a community pharmacy centre.

People can choose to book at one of these centres or to wait for their GP to invite them for an appointment at their PCN centre. Practices and the national booking service will follow up with people who have not booked an appointment, as a reminder, and to offer them another opportunity to book a vaccination. People who are housebound are being visited by their GP services in order to get vaccinated.

Current uptake

NHS England publishes vaccine figures each week at an integrated care system level. The population figures were updated nationally during the w/c 8 February, which resulted in a increase in the numbers for our region. The data published on 11 February, for the week ending Sunday 7 February, shows that we had delivered 433,136 vaccinations across the region and, based on these updated figures, this means we had given first vaccinations to 98,384 people aged 80 and over, 70,086 of 75-79 year olds and 80,058 70-74 year olds.

Encouraging uptake

The need to support communities where there are greater health inequalities is also key to the programme and there are also a number of communities where there is greater hesitancy towards the vaccine or likely to be barriers to people accessing it. These include people from Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups, more deprived areas and people from communities where there is traditionally less engagement with health services, such as travellers, asylum seekers and homeless people.

It is vital that we understand the concerns of our different communities so we can try to address these and encourage as many people as possible to get protected against COVID-19. Extensive insight work has been undertaken in this respect to inform approaches to encouraging uptake and the development of additional ways of delivering vaccinations to specific communities.

Work to address concerns and encourage uptake is based on direct engagement with local communities and providing accurate information from trusted voices. This is being done in partnership with the NHS, local authorities and the voluntary community and social enterprise sector. The approach is based on:

- Using existing mechanisms and infrastructure in each of our local places
- Targeting activity to reach communities where we know there are particular concerns about the vaccine or greater hesitancy
- Providing accurate information to communities in appropriate formats so people feel empowered to make an informed choice.

- Using a 'trusted voices' approach and developing peer support/approaches to encourage uptake, for example through community champions, and faith leaders
- Sharing best practice and working as a system to ensure we develop targeted approaches for all communities.

A key part of this is our community conversations programme, delivered through community workers and COVID-19 champions in each of our local places. These are focusing on some of the key areas of concern identified so far, including the safety of the vaccines, the speed of its development, misinformation about it affecting fertility or changing DNA and the vaccine ingredients.

Feedback from these conversations is being collated and used to identify concerns on ongoing basis and inform further work and info required. The programme will be built on to support the development of vaccine 'community champions' in each local authority as required.

Next steps

Once all those in the first four priority cohorts have been offered a first vaccination, we will be moving to cohorts five (people aged 65 and over) and six, which is people with underlying health conditions and carers. The JCVI identifies carers as being those in receipt of a carer's allowance or who are the main carer of an elderly or disabled person whose welfare may be at risk if the carer falls ill. This will include many people who are not formally registered as carers and work is underway to identify all eligible carers across the region, led by the West Yorkshire and Harrogate Health and Care Partnership.

Second vaccinations will also be starting in February, in line with the national guidance that, in most cases, these should be given up to 12 weeks after the first dose.

The West Yorkshire Vaccination Programme will continue to look at additional ways of delivering vaccinations to meet the needs of specific communities or encourage uptake amongst certain groups as required. Robust data will be crucial to identifying any communities that will require more tailored approaches, and we continue to work on ensuring we have processes in place to capture this information as effectively as possible.